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# Sweetwater Community Plan San Diego County General Plan

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August 25, 1977  
Amended  
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GPA 04-010

Adopted  
August 3, 2011

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# CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that this Plan, consisting of text and exhibits, is the Sweetwater Community Plan and is a part of the San Diego County General Plan, and that it was considered by the San Diego County Planning Commission during nine hearings that occurred from November 6, 2009 through the 20<sup>th</sup> day of August 2010, and adopted by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of August 2011.



Attest:

ERIC GIBSON, Director  
Department of Planning and Land Use

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## **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

A goal is a purpose or ultimate end towards which effort is directed. It represents a value to be sought which is general and timeless and in the public interest.

A policy is a principle which guides the allocation of County resources towards prescribed outcomes consistent with the goals.

The goals which follow reflect a thoughtful analysis of the Sweetwater area and are a statement by the citizens of the planning area and the Board of Supervisors as to the kind of total living environment that should be achieved. These goals are not a plan, they are not regulations, nor do they substitute for detailed study of current problems. They are intended to give direction to detailed planning studies which will result in definitive programs, methods and recommendations for reaching these goals to the greatest extent possible.

It is recognized that legal and economic limitations that presently exist may hinder the complete attainment of these goals. The fact that the goals may not be completely achieved should in no way hinder every effort to achieve them to the greatest extent possible.

There are seven elements of the County General Plan: Land Use, Housing, Mobility, Conservation and Open Space (combined), and Noise. Each chapter of this plan represents a subject area which coincides with an adopted element of the General Plan. The purpose of addressing these elements within this plan is to ensure that the goals and policies formulated by the Community will be compatible with those countywide goals found in the General Plan, or, if conflicts exist, they can be readily identified and reconciled. In addition, some policies found in the General Plan elements can be more relevant for one community than for others, and further elaboration or refinement may be appropriate in one case while not in another. The policies contained in this Community Plan should be regarded as applications of broad General Plan policies which are designed to fit the specific or unique circumstances existing in the individual communities.

## POLICY CODE EXPLANATION

The responsibility for carrying out the policies of this Community Plan does not lie solely with the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU). The cooperation of private property owners, developers, decision-makers and numerous other entities both public and private is necessary to make these policies successful.

A code has been placed to the right of each policy in the plan text which identifies it with the County department or the sub-departmental section of the Department of Planning and Land Use which would be most likely to take the lead in carrying out the policy (see below). In addition, there is a category for those policies that are of general concern to all persons or groups that might be involved in development or plan implementation.

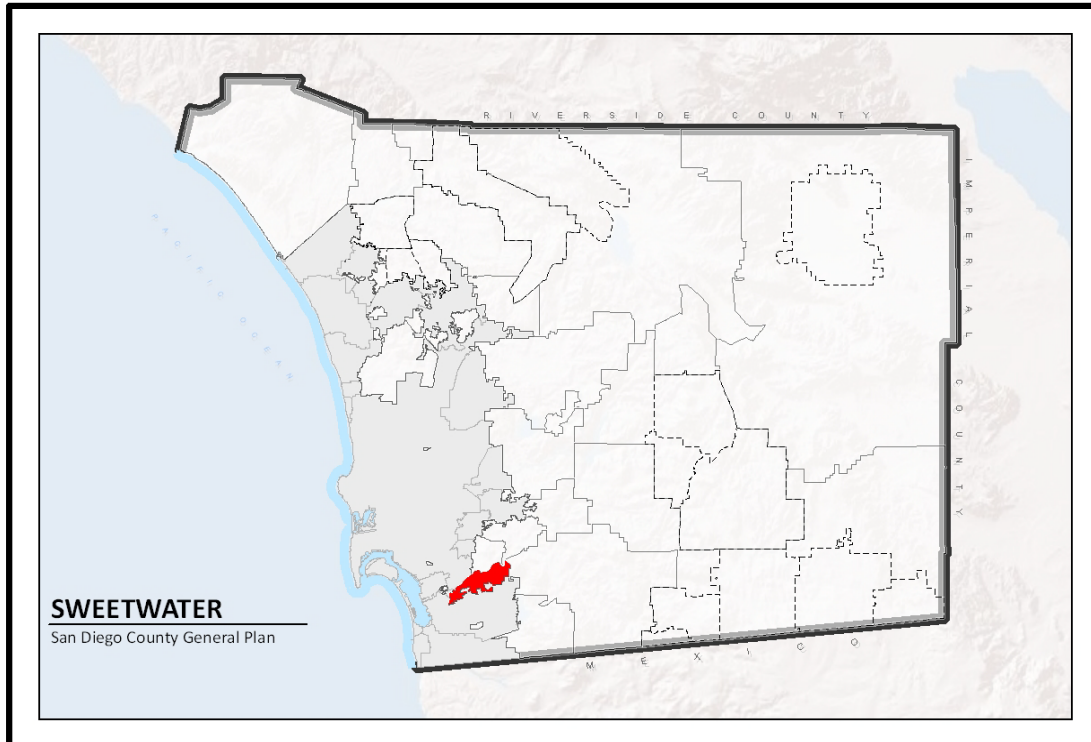
This approach is intended to make detailed information regarding policies easier to locate and it can aid staff in charting the progress of the plan.

### CODE

GEN	Policy of General Application
DPW	Department of Public Works
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
DHS	Department of Health Services
DA	Department of Agriculture
DPLU	Department of Planning and Land Use
AP	- Advance Planning
PP	- Project Planning
B	- Building Division

## INTRODUCTION

The Sweetwater Community Planning Area (CPA), see Figure 1 below, is that unincorporated portion of San Diego County south of State Route (SR) 54, east of Interstate-805 (with a small piece west of Interstate 805), north of the City of Chula Vista and west of the Jamul/Dulzura Subregion. The area encompasses approximately 8,000 acres. The 2010 SANDAG estimates for population and housing in the Sweetwater CPA identify a population of 13,805 with a total of 4,523 housing units<sup>1</sup>.



*Figure 1: Sweetwater Planning Area*

The Sweetwater Community is a unique resource within San Diego County. A Context Map, Figure 2, is provided in the Appendix. The CPA provides a semi-rural equestrian community, which is close to urban areas and employment opportunities. Its surrounding low hills and the broad Sweetwater River Valley, with tree-lined views, provide a visual relief from other residential areas. The western half of the CPA is mostly developed residential land with single-family homes on parcels less than one acre in size. There is little commercial land and no industrial land in the CPA. The commercial areas along Bonita Road that are in the City of Chula Vista and other adjacent commercial areas provide commercial services to the primarily residential Sweetwater Valley. The other major land use in the area is the Sweetwater River Valley, which is devoted to parks, golf courses, and other open space uses.

<sup>1</sup> SANDAG Profile Warehouse — <http://profilewarehouse.sandag.org/profiles/est/cocpa1918est.pdf>, August 2010

The goals of the Sweetwater Community Plan are to retain and enhance the open, rural, equestrian atmosphere. The valley enjoys its historical roots and desires to have new development be consistent with early California style architecture. Facilities and residences should be low buildings that fit into the surroundings to enhance the openness and natural feeling. New development should conform to its environment and provide a smooth transition with its neighbors.

The openness of the Sweetwater Valley extends to recreational facilities as well. An extensive riding and hiking trail system is to be preserved and developed to provide additional open space relief, alternative transportation and recreation for the residents.

The Sweetwater CPA was originally 4,500 acres of low density residential land designated as Current Urban Development Area (CUDA). In December, 1986, the boundaries of the Sweetwater CPA were expanded considerably to the east and southeast to include land formerly in the Otay Subregional Plan Area.

## **1. COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

### **GOAL**

MAINTAIN THE CHARACTER OF THE SWEETWATER COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA AS A SEMI-RURAL COMMUNITY WITH UNIQUE TOPOGRAPHIC, ECOLOGIC, HISTORIC, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS.

### **FINDINGS**

The Sweetwater CPA is a semi-rural community bordered on the west and south by the City of Chula Vista, the east by Spring Valley and on the north by National City and the City of San Diego. The area is primarily a valley and accompanying hills bisected by the Sweetwater River floodplain, with scenic and historic Sweetwater Dam controlling the river's flow. Surrounded as it is by highly urbanized areas, the Sweetwater Planning Group has been striving to preserve the rural features which have made this valley unique. Large lots, hiking and riding trails, sizable setbacks, large open spaces and unobstructed views of these open spaces are held in high regard by the residents.

The Valley is distinguished by several areas. A large section of the center of the valley along Bonita Road, has been annexed to Chula Vista, and is commercial, with several shopping centers, banks, apartment buildings and office buildings. Separate residential neighborhoods such as Bonita Woods and Bonita Highlands, retain their individuality, while adhering to a California Ranch or Mission type of architecture. Shake and tile roofs, wood siding and single story residences also typify the architecture of the area.

There are large amounts of open space in the CPA. Two golf courses lie in the river bed. Much of the remainder of the floodplain is preserved for future County parks. Sweetwater and Rohr Parks line the south side of Sweetwater Road from Willow Road to Central Avenue. A large undeveloped area encompassing 3,700 acres lies to the east of Proctor Valley Road. This area is composed of some very steep terrain including Mother Miguel Mountain.

The Sweetwater CPA is bordered by the South Bay Parkway on the north, and on the west by Interstate 805. Two major roads, Bonita Road and Sweetwater Road traverse the valley from west to east. SR-125 traverses the eastern portion of the CPA, running north-south. The CPA is currently experiencing large increases in traffic generated from outside and within the valley. The increase in traffic and urbanization of the valley is of great concern to many valley residents who wish to retain the character which first brought them to the area. This plan attempts to preserve the semi-rural atmosphere which has made Sweetwater CPA a unique oasis surrounded by highly urbanized cities.

### **LAND USE DIAGRAM**

The Sweetwater Community Planning Area Land Use Map is provided in the General Plan appendix as Figure LU-A-21.

## POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Preserve the unique character of the Sweetwater Planning Area by resisting the piecemeal annexation of portions of the CPA.
2. Ensure that designs for undeveloped land to the east maintain the overall semi-rural character of the CPA.
3. Preserve neighborhoods and distinct parts of the community by routing proposed roadways around rather than through them and by requiring pedestrian and equestrian access.
4. Establish the Sweetwater CPA as a candidate area for community design review of development projects. The objectives of design review will be: Architectural design, preservation of historic features, signage, parking areas, preservation of scenic corridors, color applications, landscape and natural features. The areas subject to Design Review will be: commercial uses; residential areas with a density of five dwelling units per acre or greater; scenic highways and overlay areas; Bonita Road; and Sweetwater Road.
5. Ensure that all new commercial areas and public facilities within the CPA are subject to design review. Such areas shall include commercial leases within the regional park, and residentially-designated areas having a density of 10.9 dwelling units to the acre or greater. Site Plan review shall occur prior to the exterior modification of existing structures or the construction of new structures.
6. Ensure that the exterior of homes in newly developed residential areas are either rural-rustic (board and batten, rough hewn, one or two-story) or California ranch/mission style. Angular ultra-modern structures shall be discouraged, or if built, sited and landscaped to be compatible with adjacent property.
7. Coordinate review of development within the CPA with adjacent jurisdictions.
8. Strictly enforce onsite and offsite, the Sign Control Sections of the Zoning Ordinance and prohibit variances of those standards. Signs shall be of a design which reflects the rustic character of the Sweetwater Valley. Unlighted wooden signs, no more than 20 feet in height above the adjacent street level are preferred.
9. Minimize the severe parking problems in the CPA by strictly adhering to Zoning Ordinance requirements.
10. Preserve, to the greatest extent possible, all existing trees over 20 feet in height. Require all Tentative Parcel Maps, Tentative Maps, Major Use Permit plot plans and Site Plans to show where such trees must be removed. Require two replacement trees of the same or similar native or naturalizing species for each tree removed.
11. Encourage natural and grass-lined flood control improvements.

12. Revegetate and landscape manufactured slopes and areas altered by grading in all developments subject to a grading permit, Major Use Permit or Site Plan. Use native and naturalizing plants to blend with existing topography.
13. Require smooth visual transitions between different uses or dwelling types in planned developments by use of buffer areas.

## **2. LAND USE**

### **RESIDENTIAL GOAL**

MAINTAIN THE EXISTING SEMI-RURAL RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE PLANNING AREA.

### **FINDINGS**

The Sweetwater area can be divided into three parts: the western third which is predominately Village density, single family residential with limited commercial land uses; the middle third which is a combination of Village and Semi-rural density residential, and the eastern third which is primarily open space preserve. A majority of the single-family residential development is in the form of small to very small subdivisions. In these small subdivisions, the housing usually is of the individual custom home type. A significant amount of the newer single-family residential development is located in larger subdivisions such as Bonita Glen, Bonita Highlands, and Bonita Downs. There are four low density residential areas in the CPA that are designated as one dwelling unit per 1, 2 or 4 acres. The housing characteristically is of the custom type: large, with open spaces, no sidewalks, usually septic systems, possibly horses, private roads. The majority of all subdivisions are characterized by no or very minimal sidewalks, open spaces, horses and larger lots.

Multi-family development in the CPA has been concentrated along Bonita Road near Interstate 805 and along Briarwood Road near South Bay Parkway. Along Bonita Road, adjacent to the commercial centers and the golf course in the City of Chula Vista, are condominiums and apartments considered part of Sweetwater. There is also a multi-family area along Valley Road developed on an incorporated peninsula which projects into the Sweetwater area. In both these instances the high density residential development has substantial impact on the Sweetwater CPA.

This Plan seeks to encourage valley residents to preserve, restore, and improve existing residential neighborhoods and to maintain gradual growth of housing units within the Sweetwater area during the next 20 years which will not significantly alter the character of the community. Existing infrastructure capacity, especially road, should be a primary consideration in reviewing and approving large scale developments. The dramatic increase in multi-family residences is of concern to the Sweetwater Community Planning Group. If this trend is allowed to continue it will definitely change the character of the community.

### **POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Assure that residential growth is gradual, orderly, and infill in nature.
2. Provide a balanced mix of single-family dwelling units to multi-family residences within the Bonita area, taking into consideration existing multi-family units within the incorporated portion of Bonita.

3. Buffer residential areas from incompatible activities which create heavy traffic, noise, lighting, odors, dust and unsightly views.
4. Ensure that future residential development is supported by adequate public services, facilities and utilities. These services shall be provided and phased concurrent with the development.
5. Require smooth visual transitions between different uses or dwelling types in planned developments by use of buffer areas.
6. Incorporate existing topography, landforms, drainage courses, vegetation and views into the design of structures and building sites to the maximum extent feasible.
7. Preserve and protect individual neighborhoods, distinct parts of the community as well as proposed residential areas by: a) routing proposed major roadways around rather than through them; b) requiring pedestrian and equestrian access; c) prohibiting encroachment by incompatible uses; and d) requiring future adjacent residential areas to have compatible densities.
8. Preserve the rural-residential atmosphere of the community by blending roads into the natural terrain and minimizing urban improvements such as curbs, gutters and sidewalks, where appropriate.
9. Site plan review is desired for all multi-family units as well as all parcels being subdivided with a resultant residential density greater than five dwelling units per acre. All properties subdivided to a density of five dwelling units or greater shall retain the site plan review designator until developed and sold to a residential consumer.
10. Provide for the preservation of indigenous plant life and encourage the planting of native drought-resistant plants in residential developments and open spaces.
11. Encourage all new residential development to be designed with equestrian trails and foot paths integral to the project.

#### COMMERCIAL GOAL

ENSURE THAT COMMERCIAL AREAS WITHIN THE SWEETWATER COMMUNITY PLAN ARE APPROPRIATE, WELL DESIGNED, AND INTEGRATED WITH SURROUNDING LAND USES.

#### FINDINGS

The Sweetwater CPA currently (1986) has about 28 acres constructed as commercial or office space. There is a great deal of commercial development in the City of Chula Vista and on the west in National City which serves the CPA. Commercial strip developments are of particular concern to the Sweetwater community because of their adverse effect on traffic circulation and the impact they have on the visual environment.

Commercial development in the CPA consists of three separate areas along Bonita Road and one area on Briarwood Road just south of SR-54. Glen Abbey Boulevard West is commercial and office professional. Glen Abbey Boulevard East, which is designated commercial, is occupied by office-professional structures. Central Avenue, designated General Commercial, is occupied by restaurants, neighborhood retail, real estate, the Bonita Post Office, and the San Diego County Library. The Briarwood Road area is designated General Commercial and consists of a multi-story retail structure occupied by a liquor store/deli and realty/insurance businesses.

#### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Restrict the expansion of commercially-designated areas within the Sweetwater Community to that which is necessary (as shown in a market analysis) to serve the needs of the residents only.
2. Review all commercial areas within the CPA, including commercial leases within the Regional Park, to ensure that:
  - a. Commercial development does not interfere functionally or visually with adjacent non-commercial land uses by requiring buffers consisting of walls (or other architectural means), berms, and/or landscaping using native or naturalizing plants.
  - b. Freestanding signs are no more than 20 feet in height above the adjacent street level. Internally illuminated signs, illuminated signs where hues change and neon signs are prohibited.
3. Require a traffic analysis for all rezones and General Plan Amendments which involve a change from residential to commercial.

#### INDUSTRIAL GOAL

DEVELOPMENT OF SITES FOR INDUSTRIAL OR MANUFACTURING USES SHALL BE STRONGLY DISCOURAGED BECAUSE OF THE ADVERSE IMPACTS OF SUCH USES ON THE RURAL RESIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE SWEETWATER VALLEY.

#### FINDINGS

No industrial or manufacturing exists currently in the CPA and no land has been set aside for industrial uses.

#### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Requests for industrial plan designations shall be strongly discouraged.

### 3. HOUSING

#### GOAL

ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES ARE PROVIDED FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF THE PLAN AREA.

#### FINDINGS

Housing types within a community are reflections of the socio-economic composition of its residences and the historic context in which the community has developed. The Sweetwater CPA is primarily a low density single family residential area containing one of the highest average incomes in unincorporated San Diego County.

The State of California requires local governments to formulate programs that will provide adequate housing opportunities for "all economic segments of the community". A primary feature therefore, of the County of San Diego Housing Element is establishing a "fair-share" contribution to the lower income housing supply for each community.

Because Sweetwater is predominately low residential densities, building multifamily housing as a means of achieving the fair share goal may not be appropriate. At these low densities a full range of urban services important for low income housing would be difficult to achieve. There may be potential for low-to moderate income housing opportunities in the following areas:

- Large undeveloped tracts of land in the eastern portion of the community, when adequate transportation services are available
- Vacant residential parcels with VR-10.9 (10.9 du/ac) designations and higher (services available)
- Some farm labor housing
- Accessory dwelling units
- Shared housing

#### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider all new multi-family residential development for its potential in meeting the fair share low-income housing goals of the Sweetwater CPA.
2. Encourage the inclusion of accessory dwelling units and farm labor housing in meeting the demand for low-income housing in the CPA.
3. Encourage non-profit organizations to provide emergency shelters for the homeless.
4. Consider mixed uses for commercial zones in the CPA and establish criteria (design, scale, location, density) for these.
5. Provide incentives for low-income housing in commercial zones by expediting permit processing.

## 4. CIRCULATION

### GOAL

ACHIEVE A BALANCED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM WHICH WILL SERVE EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE AND BE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS. PRESERVE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE ROADS IN THE PLANNING AREA WHILE DEVELOPING PEDESTRIAN, EQUESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRAILS.

### FINDINGS

The South Bay Parkway / SR-54 form the northern boundary of the Sweetwater CPA and Interstate 805 forms the western boundary of the community. Within the community, Sweetwater Road and Bonita Road are the principal arteries providing access to land uses.

Central, Willow and part of Bonita Road are the only three north-south routes which traverse the Sweetwater River Valley, which has been a natural barrier to construction of north-south routes within the community. The hilly topography has also made it difficult to construct internal circulation roads which connect the various neighborhoods in the community and to connect Sweetwater with areas to the north and south. This has helped to preserve the unique characteristics of individual neighborhoods.

Because of the rapid new development in adjacent communities and in the CPA, many of the existing roads are becoming congested. The lack of adequate north-south connector streets to move trips across the river valley has exacerbated the congestion problem. An additional local street connector is needed across the Sweetwater River, but this must be designed in an environmentally sensitive way which will minimize impact on recreational uses. Widening streets should not be the only solution proposed for these capacity problems. Alternative mobility solutions such as pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle trails have been planned and need to be constructed and maintained. Trails should be included in new development and connectivity provided between trail systems in various neighborhoods.

The design and appearance of many of these streets contribute to the semi-rural character of the community. These roads are generally two-lane roads without curb or sidewalk. It is recognized that new development will in some cases preserve the character of roads such as Acacia Avenue, Lomacitas Lane, Lynwood Street, Proctor Valley Road, Sweetwater Road, Quarry Road, Grevilla Way, and Hill Road which contribute to the semi-rural atmosphere of the CPA.

The community is already bordered by SR-54 on the north and Interstate 805 on the western end, and should not be expected to provide a disproportionate share of its land for regional highway facilities which carry principally through trips. The SR-125 freeway is a regional facility which will primarily benefit Chula Vista, new communities proposed to the south, and potential new development in the eastern portion of the CPA.

The Mobility Element road network map is provided in the General Plan Mobility Element Network Appendix as Figure M-A-21, along with an accompanying matrix which describes more specific information on the road designation / improvement, along with any special circumstances.

### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. SR-125 shall provide access while minimizing impacts to the community through:
  - a. Landscaping, berming and other measures to minimize visual and noise impacts.
  - b. Restricting the number of off-ramps located in the CPA. Allow off-ramps only on roads that meet major thoroughfare design standards from the proposed off-ramp to the nearest major thoroughfare.
  - c. Minimizing impacts to the Regional Park.
2. Continue to implement the Sweetwater Bicycle Route Plan and ensure connectivity between systems in various communities.
3. Improve the public transportation service from the CPA to surrounding communities by use of interconnecting bus routes, park and ride facilities, and other forms of mass transit.
4. Improve the circulation of Bonita Road at Interstate 805 by the addition of signals and improved on and off ramps. No additional traffic lanes should be built on Bonita Road east of Plaza Bonita Road.
5. Prohibit on-street parking on Bonita Road in commercially designated areas and adjacent to the Regional Park, and on Sweetwater Road and Willow Street adjacent to the Regional Park.
6. Allow concrete curbs, gutters, sidewalks and street signs in new subdivisions only where adjacent lots average less than one-half acre in size or where commercial or civic use types are proposed.
7. Require a traffic analysis for all development proposing a General Plan Amendment and/or Zone Reclassification to a density of 4.3 dwelling units per acre or greater.
8. Preserve and/or define individual neighborhoods and distinct parts of the community by routing major roadways around rather than through them and by requiring pedestrian and equestrian access.
9. Require safe pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle access to schools as a condition of approval of a discretionary permit.
10. Require safe bus stops for residents, especially school children, on major thoroughfares as a condition of approval of a discretionary permit.
11. Require roads to be designed to follow natural contours and thereby minimize cut and fill slopes.

## **5. PUBLIC FACILITIES, SAFETY AND EDUCATION**

### Introduction

In order to ensure the health and well being of the community residents, the County of San Diego and other public agencies provide public services and facilities to the Sweetwater CPA. These services include sewer and water facilities, police and fire protection, schools, libraries and utilities. It is the objective of the County to provide the necessary facilities to the community as they are required and to ensure that the proper share of their cost is paid by new development. Implementation of public facilities and the extension of utilities through the development process should be based upon the distribution and density of the population and the use category of the land to be served. Natural and scenic sites in particular should be developed for public purposes in harmony with the surrounding private uses.

### FACILITIES GOALS

PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN PUBLIC FACILITIES THAT ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE EXISTING AND PROJECTED COMMUNITY SIZE.

### FACILITIES FINDINGS

#### Water

There are two principal agencies that provide water service within the Sweetwater CPA, the Otay Water District and the Sweetwater Authority. The eastern portion of the CPA is served by the Otay Water District, which encompasses approximately 128 square miles (82,000 acres). It extends from the southerly boundary of the Helix Water District to the Mexican Border and generally lies easterly of Interstate 805. In 1987 the average water demand was 15 million gallons per day. Projected ultimate average demand will equal 100 million gallons per day. In 1987, five percent of the potable water delivered was for agricultural purposes.

On February 19, 1988, Otay Water District has 22,285 water meters in service. Presently, the Otay Water District has water storage for approximately 305 acre feet of water, with an additional 86 acre-feet of storage under construction.

The South Bay Irrigation District wholesales its water to the Sweetwater Authority. The District includes the City of National City, the City of Chula Vista and adjacent unincorporated county areas. Approximately 0.2% of the District's water is for agricultural purposes and the remaining 99.8% is for residential uses. The Planning Department's District Capacity report indicates that the District was serving 33,000 total connections in 1985. The District indicated a total service capacity of 55,000 connections.

The District's water supply systems include a connection to the Second San Diego Aqueduct, Sweetwater and Loveland Reservoirs on the Sweetwater River and two deep wells in National City. Sweetwater and Loveland Reservoirs have combined storage capacity of 53,000 acre feet, which represents more than two years water

supply for the area's consumers. The District has completed an 18 MG reservoir which will improve the District's storage capacity.

San Diego County could experience serious water shortages in dry periods. Any future development in Sweetwater should take this situation into account. Methods of dealing with potential water supply shortfalls are wastewater reclamation and the application of both indoor and outdoor water conservation measures.

### Sewer

Public sewerage facilities in the CPA are provided by two agencies, the County dependent Spring Valley Sanitation District (SVSD) serving the westerly portion of the CPA, and the Otay Water District (OWD, an independent agency) serving the easterly portion. The major components of the sewerage system are a wastewater collection system and a wastewater reclamation facility. Otay's water reclamation facility sends treated effluent to a 240-acre landscaped San Diego Gas and Electric Company site and to an effluent disposal site in Otay.

The Spring Valley Sanitation District, formed in 1952, operates and maintains the public sewer system in the community of Spring Valley and surrounding areas. It consists of approximately 9,386 acres and serves an estimated population of 43,000. It operates three pump stations and one meter station. It has no facility to treat this sewage and, under a joint powers agreement with the City of San Diego, the effluent enters into the Metropolitan Sewer System. Mutual aid agreements also exist with the Lemon Grove Sanitation District, the Otay Municipal Water District, and the cities of La Mesa and Chula Vista.

The Otay Water District collects and disperses sewage produced in specific improvement district areas located within the water district boundaries. The District has latent power to provide sewer service to potential land development within the District. However, the District has expressed its intent to provide such services in a manner that is consistent with certain County policies, water reclamation, and overall District interests.

### Solid Waste Disposal

There are no solid waste disposal facilities currently located within the CPA. The nearest facility serving the CPA is the County-operated Otay landfill. Impacts from the landfill are not anticipated unless capacity is exceeded. Continued population growth and large scale developments could make this a possibility, resulting in the need for an alternative site.

### Utilities

The San Diego Gas and Electric Company, which provides service to the Sweetwater Area has facilities extending eastward to the Sweetwater Reservoir. Indications are that the company is engaged in advance planning for the area to ensure that electrical capacity is available for growth which is expected to occur in the Sweetwater Area during the life of the plan. A major power transmission substation (with three important transmission corridors linking San Diego with

Arizona and Mexico) is located in these rural eastern portions of the CPA. The transmission corridors, which traverse the CPA from north to south, are owned by San Diego Gas and Electric or are in restricted use easements. The San Diego Gas and Electric Company will permit compatible secondary use of transmission easements but permission also must be obtained from underlying fee owners for such use.

#### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATION

1. Prevent the untimely introduction of services into the CPA by prohibiting sewer service outside the Village Regional Category in a manner similar to that set forth in Board of Supervisors' Policy I-107 (Policy on Long Term Availability of Sewer Services to Certain Portions of East County). [AP, PP]
2. Require public agencies to adequately landscape all of their facilities to blend with adjacent land uses. [PP]
3. Align sewage transport systems with natural drainage basins. [GEN, DPW, PP]
4. Guide new development into areas now served by water, sewer, roads and other services. [AP, PP]
5. Encourage the undergrounding of existing distribution utility lines, especially in conjunction with street improvement plans. [GEN, DPW]
6. Underground all new power distribution and communication lines where feasible. [GEN]
7. Work with sewer service agencies to ensure that the extension of sewer service, involving trunk sewer and treatment plants, is compatible with development of the area and environmental considerations for the area. [PP, AP]
8. Encourage optimum water and sewer reclamation and water conservation. [PP, AP, GEN]

## SAFETY GOAL

IDENTIFY AND MINIMIZE THOSE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE NATURAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT WHICH POSE A CLEAR AND SIGNIFICANT THREAT TO LIFE OR PROPERTY.

## SAFETY FINDINGS

State guidelines for preparation of this aspect of the Element indicate that the Plan should identify fire and geologic hazards as well as give consideration to crime prevention as part of land use development. The Element should propose measures to reduce loss of life, injuries, damage to property and economic or social dislocation which results from such circumstances. Many specific safety concerns are addressed in the Seismic Safety, Conservation and Land Use chapters of this Community Plan. The primary purpose of this section is to determine the levels of law enforcement and fire protection services that are needed in the CPA.

### Police

Police protection is provided to the Sweetwater CPA by the San Diego County Sheriff's Department from the Imperial Beach facility. The next closest department location is in Lemon Grove.

Response time in Sweetwater ranges from 10 minutes for priority calls to 15 minutes for non-priority calls. Currently there are no plans for additional stations in the area. Improved service will result from increases in personnel and additional equipment when financial constraints are resolved.

### Fire Protection

Fire protection within most of the Sweetwater CPA is provided by the Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Protection District (FPD). The District has two permanent fire stations. An approved tentative map for Bonita Meadow estates has a condition requiring dedication to the District of a fire station site off Proctor Valley Road. The District's average response time is two to four minutes, while the longest time is five to six minutes.

The California Division of Forestry (CDF) also provided wildland brush fire protection to the southeastern portion of the District and its sphere of influence area. The closest CDF station is located at 2249 Jamacha Road. California Division of Forestry has signed the County Master Mutual Aid agreement which enables them to respond to fires outside their area or responsibility when needed.

## POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Support fire protection standards in the location, equipping and manning of fire stations in the CPA. [GEN]
2. Support police protection standards in the area. [GEN]

## EDUCATION GOAL

SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AGE GROUPS THROUGH A HIGH STANDARD OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES.

## EDUCATION FINDINGS

The Sweetwater CPA is served principally by three school districts: Chula Vista City Elementary School District, Sweetwater Union High School District, and Southwestern Community College District. There is also a small piece of the northeast corner of the CPA which is in Cajon Valley Union School District.

Sweetwater Union High School District includes grades 7-12 in both junior and senior high schools. Bonita Vista Junior High School, Bonita Vista Senior High School, and Hilltop High School serve the Sweetwater CPA. The Sweetwater Union High School District indicated that if an additional school is required in this general area, it would most likely be located in the El Rancho del Rey Specific Plan area, directly south of the Sweetwater CPA.

The Chula Vista City School District provides educational services for elementary grades kindergarten through sixth. Three schools serve the Sweetwater CPA: Sunnyside, Valley Vista and Ella B. Allen. Ella B. Allen is operating at capacity. Valley Vista occupies portable classroom buildings to relieve overcrowding. These classrooms will only accommodate current enrollment and not provide additional capacity. Portables also accommodate enrollment at the Sunnyside School, again not providing for additional capacity.

No new elementary schools are proposed to be constructed within the Sweetwater CPA. School districts serving the Sweetwater CPA are currently at, or exceeding their capacity. Under the terms of recent legislation, school districts are authorized to levy fees against residential, commercial and industrial projects to fund new school facilities. This allows an additional source of funds for long term improvements designed to relieve overcrowded conditions. The ability to levy fees will remain in effect indefinitely unless amended by the legislature.

## POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Coordinate with school districts to locate and maintain schools in areas free of disturbing factors such as heavy traffic flow or incompatible land uses. [AP]
2. Coordinate with school districts to develop schools in conjunction with neighborhood and community recreation facilities. [AP, DPR]
3. Coordinate school facility planning with residential development to ensure that school facilities will be available to accommodate the increase in enrollment without overcrowding. [AP]
4. Coordinate with school districts to ensure the appropriate location and size of schools through the early acquisition of new sites. [AP]

## 6. CONSERVATION

### GENERAL GOAL

TO PRESERVE THE SWEETWATER PLANNING AREAS UNIQUE, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES WHICH SUPPORT ITS TRADITIONAL SEMI-RURAL LIFESTYLE.

### FINDINGS

The Sweetwater CPA possesses landforms of great scenic beauty. Natural lands, however, are susceptible to development pressure. The Resource Conservation Areas (RCA's) are one of the tools available that can help preserve these sensitive areas in a manner that satisfies public and/or private objectives. The location of the Community's RCA's and the significant resources associated with them are shown in the Appendix (see also Figure 3).

The riparian habitat areas of the Sweetwater River and the Central Creek contain natural resources that require significant preservation activities. These riparian habitat areas contain vegetation which support local endangered species such as the least Bell's vireo and migratory water fowls. The riparian areas within the CPA are incorporated into the South County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) for the vireo. Those areas not within the MSCP must also be protected to preserve the ever diminishing riparian areas which add to the enrichment of the biological mix of the region.

The low rolling hills of Bonita provide a great diversity of plant and animal species that must be protected and preserved through the land use process. Coastal sage woodlands and the coast barrel cactus are species that should be preserved and their habitats impacted in a minimal fashion. The eastern areas of the Sweetwater CPA include the habitat of the rare and endangered black-tailed gnatcatcher. Development in the eastern area must be carefully considered to protect the nesting and feeding areas for this species. The cactus wren and the burrowing owl are regionally declining species and their survival and enhancement must be assured. Within much of Bonita the naturalized eucalyptus trees have developed into an integral part of the community character. These trees offer a significant visual amenity and their loss due to man's activity creates significant community controversy. Large trees, whether eucalyptus or other varieties should be preserved if at all feasible in the development process.

### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Protect the riparian habitats of the Sweetwater River and Central Creek by allowing only essential public facilities. Strongly discourage private development of riparian areas and floodplains. [AP, PP]
2. Support the goals and policies of the Habitat Conservation Plan for the least Bell's vireo. [AP]

3. Develop property within the rolling hills of the Bonita area so that it conforms to existing land forms. Place structures below the hillsides to allow landforms to remain the dominant feature of the development. [PP] (See also Conservation and Open Space Policy COS-12.2)
4. Preserve the habitat of the coast barrel cactus and the coastal sage woodlands by open space easements or other means that will endure long term protection. [PP, AP]
5. Protect the native vegetation needed in the eastern portions of the CPA for the habitat of the endangered black-tailed gnatcatcher. Development in these habitat areas should be at the lowest density feasible with extensive open space areas. [PP, AP]
6. Preserve the habitats of the cactus wren and the burrowing owl. [PP, AP]
7. Preserve the major stands of eucalyptus trees and large individual specimen trees which comprise a major feature of the community character. [PP, AP]

#### NATURAL HABITAT PROTECTION GOAL

PREVENT THE UNNECESSARY ALTERATION OF THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE WITHIN THE SWEETWATER PLAN AREA - ESPECIALLY THE UNDEVELOPED LAND IN THE EASTERN PORTION OF THE PLAN AREA

#### FINDINGS

The 8,118 acre Sweetwater CPA is located in the coastal plains and foothills of southwestern San Diego County. The topography consists of rolling to steep hillsides. The Sweetwater River transverses the valley from east to west and is the predominant feature of the CPA. Most of the original vegetation of the area has been modified by development. The exception is the undeveloped estate and multiple rural lands in the eastern portion. Coastal mixed chaparral and coastal sage scrub exist on hilly terrain and steep slopes are a significant element contributing to the unique natural character of the CPA. These provide vegetation habitat for a variety of indigenous animal species.

Isolated remnants of riparian woodland dominated by sycamores and willows lie within the Sweetwater River channel between Central and Bonita Roads. Sweetwater residential areas are dominated by eucalyptus, California and Brazilian pepper trees.

#### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Preserve the integrity, function and long-term viability of environmentally sensitive habitat within the Sweetwater CPA. Emphasis shall be placed on areas exhibiting riparian characteristics; coastal sage and scrub; and coastal mixed chaparral. [AP, PP]
2. Prevent adverse impacts to the coastal mixed chaparral and coastal sage scrub habitat by preserving within a major inland open space system all native vegetation on natural slopes of 25% or more. [AP, PP]
3. Apply the following guidelines to evaluate proposals for development on parcels of ten acres or more located within the environmentally sensitive

coastal mixed chaparral and coastal sage scrub habitats. [AP, PP]

- a. Subject all development to the Planned Development Procedures of the County Zoning Ordinance.
  - b. Cluster development away from slopes of 25% or more.
  - c. Design and incorporate open space as a contiguous network within the project and linked with open space areas on adjacent parcels; or linked with other open space corridors of community or regional significance where feasible.
  - d. Create or maintain local wildlife movement corridors.
  - e. Retain all types of plant habitats that occur naturally on the site to achieve the best possible representation of the original habitat.
  - f. Integrate the design of the development with the uses and activities of adjacent parcels.
  - g. Preserve rare and endangered species on site and in their natural habitat.
4. Require new landscaping to utilize at least 50% indigenous species when the natural terrain is altered. [PP]

#### SOILS GOAL

MINIMIZE THE IMPACTS ON THE UNIQUE SOIL CHARACTERISTICS AND EROSION INCIDENT TO DEVELOPMENT.

#### FINDINGS

The Sweetwater CPA is located almost entirely in the Chula Vista Terrace of the San Diego coastal plain. The Chula Vista Terrace is a dissected marine wave cut platform which slopes gently to the ocean. Marine sedimentary rock covers most of the CPA. In general, soils in the Sweetwater CPA have severe septic tank limitations, moderate to severe erodibility and high to very high runoff potential. Development limitations vary depending on the presence of the above factors. Shrink-swell potential varies generally throughout the CPA.

Most of the remaining undeveloped land in Sweetwater is located in the mountainous eastern portion of the CPA which includes Mother Miguel Mountain. Development in this area may require extensive grading for building pads and access roads. Due to the high erosion factor, serious sedimentation of the Sweetwater River will result if graded areas, particularly slopes, are not immediately planted.

#### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Design buildings to fit the existing topography. This can be accomplished by planning single level houses up or down sloped sites. [PP]

2. Retain the natural appearance of the existing land forms through minimal grading. Natural slopes in excess of 25% shall be protected from unnecessary grading. [PP, AP]
3. Preserve natural conditions of drainage where feasible. Changes to the natural contours shall not cause damage to nearby properties. [PP]
4. Require all grading plans to include preparation for landscaping. [DPW, PP]
5. Retain unaltered land greater than 25% slope and at least 1,000 square feet in area to be retained in its natural state. [PP, DPW]
6. Minimize brushing for agricultural uses and retain areas of natural vegetation to facilitate habitat regeneration. [GEN, PP]

### CULTURAL SITES GOAL

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND PROVIDE ADEQUATE CONSERVATION OF THESE CULTURAL RESOURCES.

### FINDINGS

The archaeological sites located within the Sweetwater CPA provide an exceptional opportunity to impart to the public a direct line to the prehistoric and historic past of San Diego as well as North America. Four known sites exist within the central planning area and the potential for resources is high in the eastern territories.

Three cultural phases have been recognized for the area; the San Dieguito aspect (12,000 Before Present (BP) to 8,500 BP); the La Jolla (7,500 BP to 1,000 BP); and the Kummeyaay/Luisino, an aspect of the late milling stone tradition (1,000 BP to the present). Many of the archaeological sites for Sweetwater are found near creeks and rivers of the area. The types of sites found in the area include lithic scatters and village sites.

The Board of Supervisors have determined that archaeological investigation is in the public interest and policies in the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan, have been established to encourage such investigations. Land development and agriculture activities have obliterated records of past human archaeological sites and in doing so have deprived the public their heritage. County policy requires preservation of significant prehistoric, historic archaeological, and historic architecture sites through as broad a spectrum of planning mechanisms as possible (e.g. open space easements, salvaging programs, soil capping and National Historic Trust registry).

In addition to archaeological resources, there are historic sites within the Sweetwater CPA which can be proposed as historic landmarks. If adopted they can add to the richness and diversity of the community character.

### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Precede development or construction on significant historic sites by test excavations and salvage programs where appropriate. [PP]

2. Require that agricultural grading, blading or other disturbances of natural terrain, which could result in damage or loss of irreplaceable cultural artifacts, is subject to permit processing to provide archaeological review. [DPW]
3. Encourage the location of an information center in the Sweetwater Park to facilitate community understanding of the region's cultural history. [GEN, DPR]
4. Seek funding from the State Historic Preservation Office to survey the Sweetwater CPA and nominate all such sites to the National Register of Historic Sites. [GEN]
5. Direct the County Historic Site Board to analyze and register all prehistoric and historic sites which qualify for the National or County Landmark status in the Sweetwater Area. [GEN]
6. Encourage, through the permit process, owners of significant historic architectural sites to dedicate open space easements for income tax benefits and register for Landmark Zoning with the County Historic Site Board. [PP, B]
7. Apply the Historical Regulator to selected historical structures in order to require a site plan on any modification or demolition of the structures. The following structures are to include the "H" Special Area Regulator: [PP]
  - a. Ballinger/Milburn House (1890), 6034 San Miguel Road
  - b. Wesleyan Church at the Valley (1913), 5305 Sweetwater Road
  - c. U.S. Grant/Farrington House (1890), 5771 Sweetwater Road
  - d. Sweetwater Womens Club (1933)
  - e. Irving Gill house (1911)
  - f. The Little Chapel of the Roses/Glen Abby Mortuary (1920)
  - g. Justice Whelan House

#### FLOODPLAIN AND WATER COURSE GOAL

PROVIDE PROTECTION FROM LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY FROM FLOODING WHILE PRESERVING FLOODPLAINS AND WATER COURSES IN THEIR NATURAL STATE.

#### FINDINGS

The Sweetwater CPA is subject to sudden and severe floods. A Master Plan (Zone 3, San Diego County Flood Control District) exists to provide flood control. The plan was adopted for the Sweetwater Community based on existing flooding and erosion problems and anticipated land development projects which would encroach upon local water courses. The essence of the plan is the conservation of floodplains, the use of non-structural flood control devices and encouragement of tax assessments commensurate with restriction of permitted uses within

floodways. County staff (DPW) advises that no funds are available for County-constructed flood control facilities.

The Sweetwater River area contains extensive areas of floodplain overlay zoning and floodway zoning. The floodway zoning prohibits or severely restricts grading, filling, and construction. The majority of the floodway is in public ownership. Development within the floodplain overlay zone is restricted, but not as severely as the floodway zone.

The Sweetwater Reservoir provides water to the entire South Bay area. Protection of this water from urban runoff and other sources of pollution is an important goal.

### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Retain water courses in their natural state and prohibit all structures within the floodway. [PP, DPW]
2. Encourage natural and grass lined flood control improvements. [PP, DPW]
3. Provide on and off site flood control improvements to ensure that water released from new developments is returned to the water course in the same location in a natural manner without an increase in the velocity. [DPW]
4. Disallow upstream development which exacerbates a currently identified downstream flooding problem. All flood control installations shall be to County standards. [DPW]
5. Require the applicant for any subdivision within the Sweetwater Reservoir Basin (prior to approval of a final subdivision map) to present evidence to the Department of Public Works from the Sweetwater Authority stating that the Sweetwater Authority Resolution has been satisfied with respect to the protection of Sweetwater Reservoir from urban related runoff resulting from development. [DPW]

### PALEONTOLOGY GOAL

PROVIDE ADEQUATE CONSERVATION OF PALEONTOLOGY DEPOSITS.

### FINDINGS

Exposed within the Sweetwater CPA are sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks ranging in age from 140,000,000 years old to the present. These rocks were deposited in seas, along streams and by volcanic activity. Marine deposits called the San Diego Formation can be viewed from cuts along East H Street and in the hillsides around Glen Abby where fossil layers are visible. The San Diego Formation is the richest and most complete marine deposit in North America and has produced more fossil birds than any deposit of this age in the world. Significant fossil recoveries from the Sweetwater Formation and the Otay Formation were made during excavations at the nearby Eastlake development. Surveys of surface conditions are not a reliable indicator of the presence or absence of fossils. Slopwash and weathering make the chances of finding fossils

without excavation very small. Any construction could have the potential for destroying fossils in underlying formations. Their destruction would mean the loss of scientific information they represent. Therefore, any construction in sensitive areas would require the presence of a paleontologist when grading occurs.

#### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Require development to provide a letter indicating that a qualified paleontologist has been retained to carry out the resource mitigation, prior to issuance of a permit to grade in sensitive areas. [DPLU]
2. Require the consulting paleontologist to be present at the pre-grading meeting to consult with the construction and grading contractors. [DPLU]
3. Ensure that a representative of the consulting paleontologist is on site at all times when formations with the potential to yield fossils are being graded. Cuts shall be inspected for contained fossils. [DPLU]
4. Empower the paleontologist to temporarily direct, divert, or halt grading to allow recovery of the resources in a timely manner in the event that significant paleontological resources are discovered. [DPLU]
5. Require that any fossils collected during the course of this program shall be cleaned, sorted, and cataloged, and then (with the owner's permission) deposited in a scientific institution with paleontological collections, such as the San Diego Natural History Museum. [DPLU]
6. Require a report of findings, even if negative, be filed with the San Diego Museum of Natural History within six weeks of the completion of grading for the project. [DPLU]

## **7. RECREATION**

### GOAL:

PROVIDE REGIONAL AND LOCAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVES WHICH CONSIDER THE UNIQUE EQUESTRIAN CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY, THE NEED FOR TRADITIONAL FORMS OF RECREATION AND THE NEED TO PROVIDE NATURAL OPEN SPACE. ESTABLISH AND PROTECT AN EFFICIENT AND SAFE NETWORK OF PUBLIC RIDING AND HIKING TRAILS.

### FINDINGS

There are currently three parks that serve the Sweetwater CPA: Sweetwater Regional Park, and two local parks (Sweetwater Park and Rohr Park). Sweetwater Regional Park will provide a natural open space along the Sweetwater River with a system of trails for horseback riding, hiking, scenic enjoyment and wildlife observation. The regional park will have facilities to serve the region, but it will also have local park facilities. The two local parks have been given to the City of Chula Vista. Notably absent in the area are multi-purpose playing fields for the use of all age groups.

The Sweetwater CPA has an extensive network of regional and local equestrian trails. The regional trail traverses the CPA east to west through the regional park and golf course lands. The portions of this trail within the regional park are under the jurisdiction of the County Parks and Recreation Department. There are at the present time several equestrian trails with easements surrounding housing developments in the Sweetwater community which are designed to link with the County trail within the regional park. Developments such as Bonita Highlands, Bonita Hills Ranch, the Bluffs, Long Canyon and Bonita Downs all have existing trail systems which have been offered to the County. These systems are heavily used and future growth patterns indicate a need for continuing development of these recreational activities. It is essential to have connectivity between these individual neighborhood trails. There should be mandatory dedication of trails.

### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Support the ongoing development program for Sweetwater Regional Park, as currently approved by the Board of Supervisors, which encourages a broad variety of recreational activities, including passive uses. [DPR]
2. Discourage uses in the Regional Park which require night lighting except for security purposes. [DPR]
3. Prohibit on street parking on Bonita Road in commercially designated areas and adjacent to the Regional Park, and on Sweetwater Road and Willow Street adjacent to the Regional Park. [DPW]

4. Require structures and earthwork improvements within the Regional Park to be designed to blend with the natural topography and preserve scenic views identified during environmental review. [DPW]
5. Encourage development of multi-use playing fields and supporting facilities. [AP, PP]

## **8. SCENIC HIGHWAYS**

### GOAL

PRESERVE, PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE SCENIC HIGHWAY CORRIDORS TO PROVIDE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING VEHICULAR TRAVEL IN THE SWEETWATER PLANNING AREA.

### FINDINGS

The land forms in Sweetwater have created a multitude of scenic vistas. In spite of a great deal of urbanization, this area retains the attractiveness that drew populations to San Diego County. In order to preserve the charm and splendor of many of these areas, the County provides a County Scenic Highway System (see County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element Figure C-5 and Table COS-1). This chapter outlines criteria for the identification and the protection of these corridors.

The following roadways in the Sweetwater CPA are identified in the County Scenic Highway System: Bonita Road, San Miguel, Guajolote and Sweetwater Road. None of these roads, as yet, have been adopted by the State as a Scenic Highway due to the time and cost factors involved in the process. In the absence of the completion of the state adoption process the policies described below are intended to preserve these areas.

Other roads within Bonita that should be considered for design review are San Miguel Road, Quarry Road and Proctor Valley Road. These roads should be reviewed for their scenic values, unique vegetation and preservation of the rural, rustic style of structures that have long characterized the Valley.

### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Require site plan review by the use of the "D" Design regulator on Bonita Road for all commercial property to preserve the scenic aspects of the roadway. [PP]
2. Encourage design review of all properties within the County Scenic Highway System Corridors and any other areas deemed to be of scenic consideration for those roadways. Include these areas in the Community Design Review process. [AP, PP]

## 9. SEISMIC SAFETY

### GOAL

PROMOTE PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF POTENTIAL SEISMIC HAZARDS IN THE PLANNING AREA AND ENSURE THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OBSERVES THE LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY THESE HAZARDS.

### FINDINGS

The possibility of substantial damage from seismic and other geologic activity is ever present in the San Diego region and in the Sweetwater CPA. Much of the impending earthquake-related damage and loss of life, however, can be prevented if good planning, development and construction practices are adhered to.

Seismic-related problems have already been identified in the CPA including existing and potential fault traces. For example, the La Nacion Fault, due to relatively recent activity (11,000 years ago) has been classified as active and should be handled as such. Other faults traversing the CPA are considered potentially active; however, they do not present a considerable threat to the residents and structures. The threat of liquefaction and other landslides activity should also be considered when assessing the geologic risks facing this area. Also, the significantly high water-table combined with relatively unstable geologic formations accentuates the aforementioned problems.

### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review all proposed projects in the CPA to determine their suitability in regard to landslide, earthquake fault line or other geologic characteristics. [PP, B]
2. Establish land utilization limitations for those areas subject to seismic and geologic hazards by limiting development along known seismic areas. [AP, PP]
3. Encourage further field work along the Sweetwater Fault, La Nacion Fault and all minor faults within the CPA and make information available for future private and public use. [AP]
4. Establish regulations to prevent projects from developing on areas considered geologically hazardous. Periodically review these regulations and recommend changes as necessary. [AP]

## **10. OPEN SPACE**

### GOAL

PRESERVE A SYSTEM OF OPEN SPACE AREAS AND INTERCONNECTING CORRIDORS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES, OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL USES, AND PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.

### FINDINGS

The concept of open space is to identify and preserve open spaces that may be used for various passive purposes. The purpose of open space is: to manage production of resources; for use of recreational facilities; to manage space which could be a public health problem. The Parks, Open Space, and Recreation section of the Conservation and Open Space Element overlaps other elements of the General Plan including Land Use, Safety and Conservation.

The principle open space areas in Sweetwater are the Sweetwater River Valley and Mother Miguel Mountain. In addition, there is the Sweetwater Reservoir, dedicated open space, the park land in the community, and the many riding and hiking trails in the community which form part of the open space network.

### POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integrate private, public, and semi-public lands into a continuous and functional open space network for recreation and wildlife/habitat management. [AP]
2. Require open space dedications in private residential developments which coincide or link with established or functional open space corridors, recreational locations and conservation areas. [PP]
3. Encourage the utilization of open space as a buffer between incompatible land uses. [AP, PP]

## 11. NOISE

### GOAL

TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE SWEETWATER VALLEY BY CONFORMING TO THE NOISE ELEMENT OF THE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN AND THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS LEGISLATIVE POLICY. WHERE THIS GOAL, DUE TO EXISTING CONDITIONS, IS NOT ATTAINABLE, MAKE THE MAXIMUM REDUCTION IN NOISE POLLUTION THAT IS POSSIBLE CONSIDERING CURRENT TECHNOLOGY.

### FINDINGS

Due to its location, the Sweetwater Valley is, and will continue to be, impacted by various types of noise pollution. At present the predominant source is surface vehicular traffic. Major thoroughfares within the community and on the fringes carry large traffic volumes. As these traffic volumes increase there is a concurrent increase in noise.

Certain local streets are becoming primary collectors for these major thoroughfares (e.g. Willow Road, Central Avenue, Corral Canyon Road) with resultant increases in traffic and noise in their vicinity. Continued development to the east and south of the planning area will produce traffic and noise that will be brought into the valley.

The greatest noise pollution exists along Interstate 805 with CNEL reaching 79 dB. The South Bay Parkway produces levels between 73 and 76 dB. Bonita Road varies from 75 dB at the Interstate 805 ramp to 60dB at San Miguel Road. Sweetwater Road produces CNEL of 73 decibels at the I-805 ramp to 64 decibels in the vicinity of Quarry Road.

Another area of concern is aircraft noise. Brown Field lies to the south of the CPA and while it currently generated little noise other than an occasional low flying aircraft, plans are continually being put forth for increasing use of this airport. The CPA is affected primarily by inbound air traffic, the only approach to Brown Field being from the north. Even if this airport remains confined to general aviation aircraft, increased use could produce a noise problem.

The noise pollution in certain areas of Sweetwater already exceeds the County's published noise standards. It will be extremely difficult to meet County noise standards, however, action should be taken to prevent any increases and wherever feasible to reduce the existing noise pollution. In certain areas this may mean modification of existing structures. Efforts should be made to reduce vehicular traffic by providing new routes and re-routing the noisiest traffic on present roadways. Any development, commercial or residential, within the planning area must be evaluated with regard to noise pollution and must adhere to the Noise Element of the County General Plan and meet the requirements of the County Noise Ordinance. Developments outside the CPA that will impact the Sweetwater Valley should be evaluated for such impact.

## POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

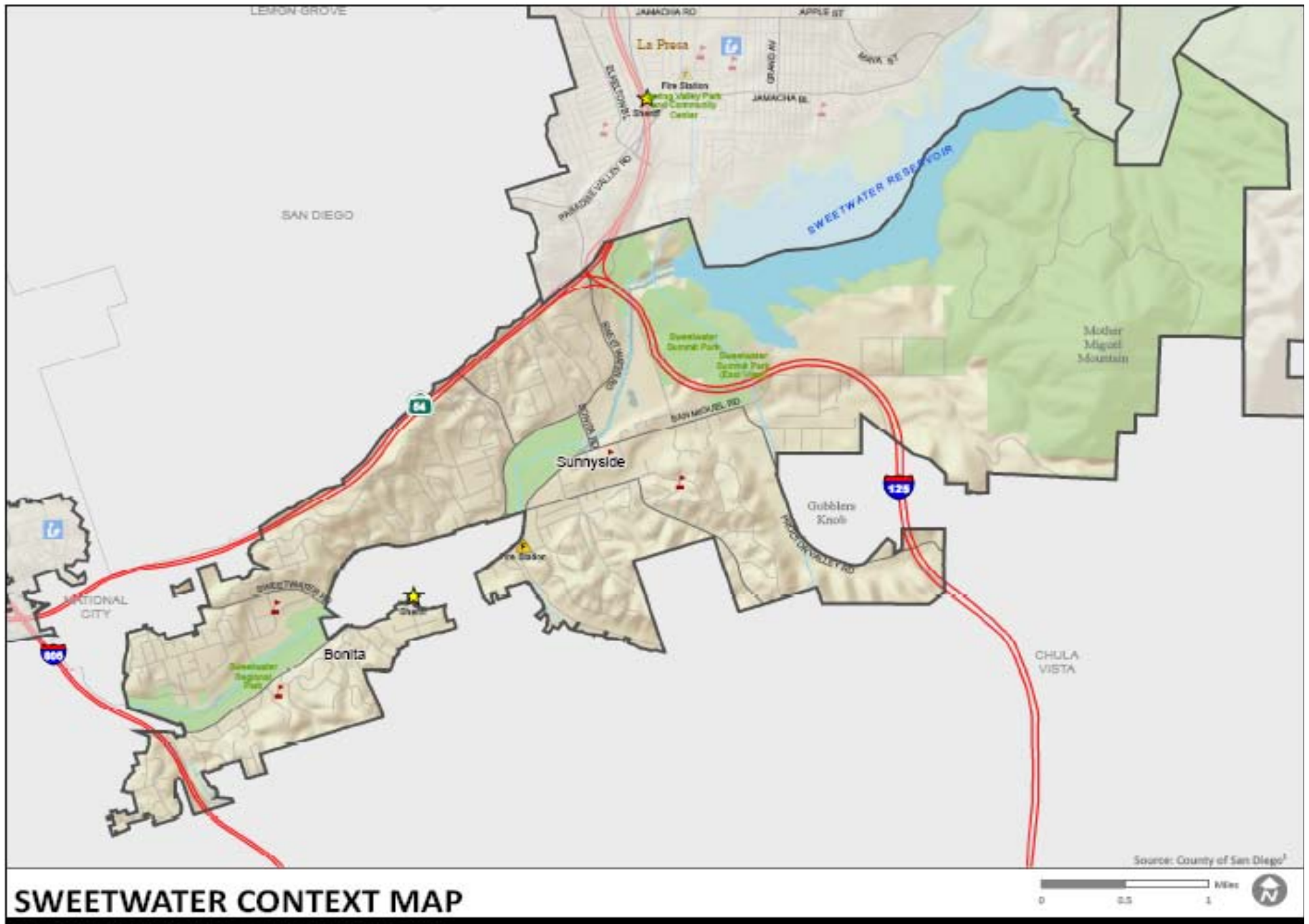
1. Adhere to the Noise Element of the County General Plan by requiring an acoustical study for any development that would appear to result in any existing or future noise sensitive area being subjected to noise levels equal to CNEL 60 decibels or greater. Disapprove of development not meeting these criteria unless modifications are made. [PP]
2. Develop a circulation plan that will discourage through traffic on Bonita Road and Sweetwater Road, and divert such traffic to Telegraph Canyon Road and the South Bay Parkway. [AP, DPW]
3. Support adoption of truck traffic ordinances that would reroute east/west truck traffic where feasible to Telegraph Canyon Road and the South Bay Parkway. Prohibit the use of local streets by trucks except for the purpose of delivery or pickup. [DPW]
4. Monitor further development of Brown Field to provide for inbound corridors well clear of residential areas. If development for use by jet aircraft is allowed, establish a noise monitoring system in the vicinity of the airport so that potential noise problems may be quickly identified and remedied. [GEN]

## **APPENDIX**

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NOTE: Graphics and "D" Designators in this appendix are for informational purposes only and are not an adopted portion of the text. See County Maps for official graphical description.



## SWEETWATER CONTEXT MAP

San Diego County General Plan

SWEETWATER COMMUNITY PLAN

Figure 2

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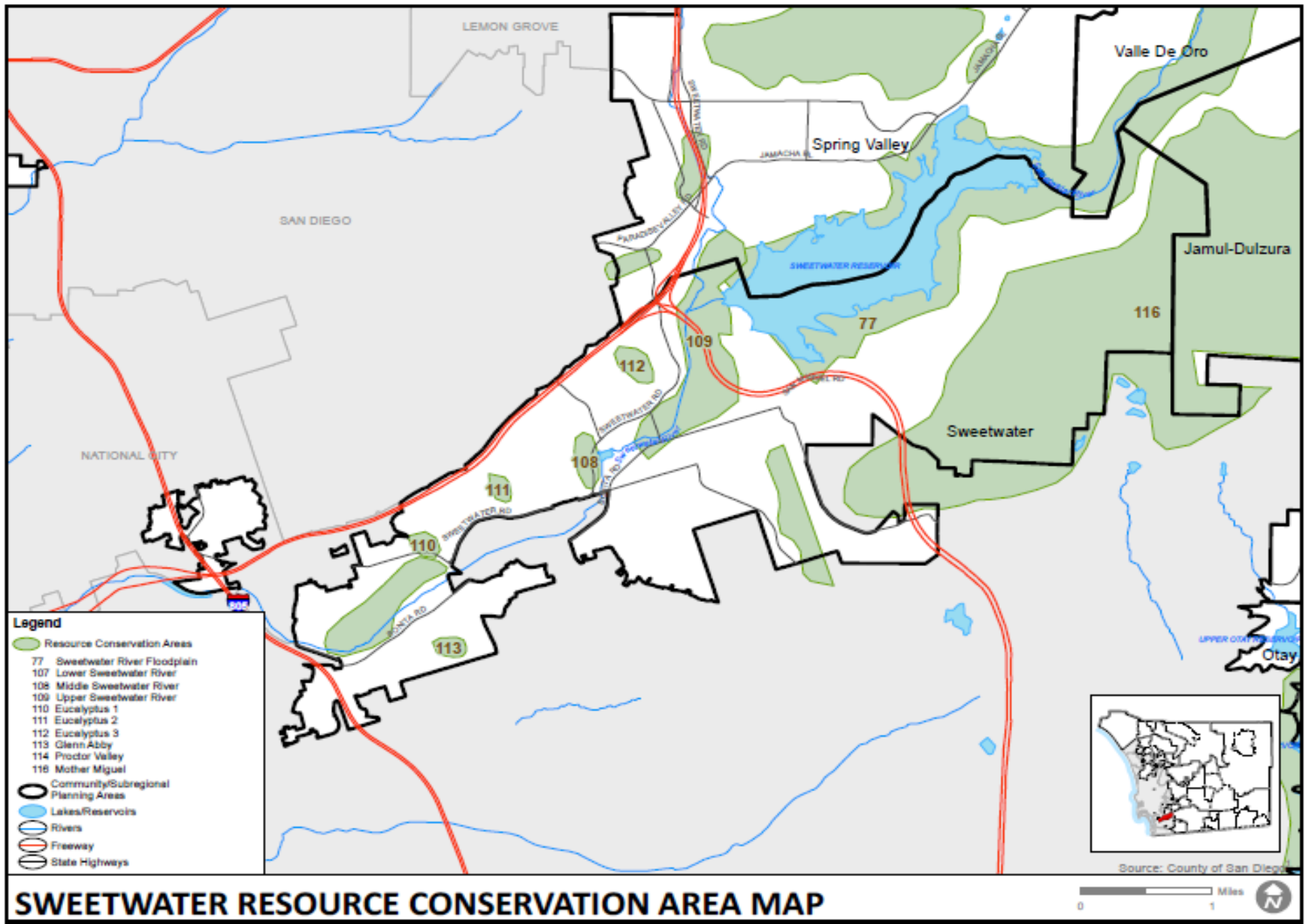


Figure 3

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## RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREAS FOR SWEETWATER CPA

77. Sweetwater River Floodplain - Resources include riparian and riparian woodland habitats. These habitats are important for plant species diversity, including sycamores, cottonwoods, willows, oaks and of wildlife species including migratory song birds. Vegetation adjacent to the riparian area consists of coastal sage scrub, chamise chaparral, and grassland and provides an edge habitat contributing even greater diversity of plant and wildlife species to the ecosystem. Rare vernal pools are found south of the Sweetwater Reservoir. The sensitive plant species Hemizonia conjugens and sensitive bird species (Grasshopper sparrow) are also known to occur here.
107. Lower Sweetwater River - Important riparian woodlands occur in this region providing habitat for a variety of plant and wildlife species having limited distribution. The federally endangered bird the Least Bell's vireo and the San Diego ragweed may potentially occur here.
108. Middle Sweetwater River - This area contains an important mature riparian zone consisting of native trees, sedges, and grasses creating an aesthetic environment. A variety of wildlife is supported by this vegetation including potential habitat for the Least Bell's vireo.
109. Upper Sweetwater River - Important resources to be conserved in this region include a riparian zone, grasslands, and the sensitive coastal sage scrub plant community. The coastal sage scrub contains several sensitive plants: Coast barrel cactus (Ferocactus viridescens), California adolphia (Adolphia californica), and Otay tar weed (Hemizonia conjugens), and supports populations of Cactus wren, and Black-tailed gnatcatcher, both sensitive bird species. Archaeological sites are also found in this region.
110. Eucalyptus Grove 1 - The resource to be conserved in this area is a eucalyptus grove which provides avian habitats as well as an aesthetic buffer.
111. Eucalyptus Grove 2 - The resource to be conserved in this area is a eucalyptus grove which provided avian habitats as well as an aesthetic buffer.
112. Eucalyptus Grove 3 - The resource to be conserved in this area is a eucalyptus grove which provides avian habitats as well as an aesthetic buffer.
113. Glen Abby - The resources of importance in this region are the Rhus woodland plant community and the cacti thicket, providing habitat for the Cactus wren, a locally endangered bird species.
114. Proctor Valley Road - The resource to be conserved in this area is grassland and coastal sage scrub which provide habitat for Burrowing Owls, a regionally declining species, coast barrel cactus (Ferocactus viridescens) and the Marsh elder (Iva hayesiana) sensitive plant species.
116. Mother Miguel Mountain - Resources to be conserved in this area include a large undisturbed area of coastal sage scrub, a sensitive plant community, as well as some chamise chaparral and grasslands. These vegetation community types provide excellent habitat for the Golden eagle, a sensitive bird species known to occur here. The area supports significant stands of the rare coast barrel cactus (Ferocactus viridescens). The area is also a major portion of the scenic viewshed of the eastern Sweetwater Area.

## **DESIGN DESIGNATORS**

DESIGNATOR "D1" FOR ALL COMMERCIAL AREAS (Subareas 101, 103, 104, 105, 122, 123, 125, 126, 128-C, 129 and 205)

### OBJECTIVES

The standards set forth below are intended to serve as an interim set of standards until the Board of Supervisors approves the completion of a Design Manual and Design Review Board for Bonita Road and other areas of the Sweetwater Community Planning Area (SCPA). These standards shall apply to any development on commercially zoned parcels except as exempted below. The objective is to ensure that all developments that are permitted within the commercial zoning are developed in a consistent way with the existing semi-rural character of the community.

### EXEMPTIONS

No site plans are required for interior changes only to an existing structure. The standards are intended for new commercial, multi-family residential, and civic uses. For modification of existing structures, the criteria may be relaxed if strict enforcement would require significant demolition of existing structures.

### STANDARDS

Prior to approval of any development permits on the site, a site plan shall be submitted which conforms to all relevant County Ordinances and Codes, and in addition meets the following criteria:

1. Structures shall use one of the following on their exposed surfaces:
  - Wood siding painted with light colors or stained in natural wood tones;
  - Cement plaster over masonry or wood frame;
  - Walls built of or faced with stone or brick;
  - Exposed timber beams and columns;
  - Approved fire resistant wood shingles.
2. Roofs shall be earth-toned and surfaced with one of the following materials:
  - Concrete tile or shingle;
  - Clay tile roofs;
  - Wood shingles and shakes;
  - Composition shingle;
  - Quality synthetic materials may be used.
3. When necessary to place utilities on the roof, all visible surface equipment shall be the same color as the roof itself, preferably earth tones. And, if surface equipment is visible a built-up roof must be accompanied by parapets and/or other screening device to help screen them from view. Commercial buildings with a large flat roof surface must incorporate shed roofs, porches or trellises covering exterior entryways and walkways to aid in "scaling down" the structure.

4. Large unbroken expanses of wall or facade are unacceptable. Offsets and recesses with sufficiently dense landscaping, projections and overhangs must be used to produce effective shadow interest areas.
5. Landscaping is an important part of the design; exterior landscaping affects the character of the community. Individual sites must include parking lot landscaping and planted setbacks to create a continuous landscaped facade along public streets. The minimum acceptable parking lot landscaping standards are outlined in the County's Off street Parking Design Manual. The following additional standards shall be applied to the design of off street parking areas in SCPA:
  - Individual parking areas shall be limited to a maximum of 24 spaces; where more than 24 spaces are required for a development, separate areas not exceeding 24 spaces shall be designed and buffered by ten foot planted breaks between adjacent areas.
  - In the perimeter of the parking area adjacent to or visible from public streets at least one tree shall be planted at an interval of not more than five parking spaces.
6. Storage and service areas must be located and landscaped to minimize public view and noise from roads and neighboring properties. [CPG: completely screened from public view]
7. Site lighting shall be limited to that necessary for security, safety, identification or appropriate recreational use. All parking lot and private street lighting shall be limited to 15 feet in height and be fully shielded so that all light rays emitted by the fixture are projected downward and away from public streets and adjoining properties. All parking lot lighting shall be integrated with landscaping.
8. To achieve consistency in Sweetwater's signage, three primary sign types are acceptable:
  - a. Monument signs of wood construction with painted or raised letters and logos.
  - b. Freestanding pole hanging signs of wood or ornamental metal (i.e. wrought iron) construction. Painted or raised letters and logos are preferred.
  - c. Wall signs shall be wood panel or raised letters and integrated with the form and character of the building. The sign must be limited to 10 percent of the elevation, not to exceed 100 square feet.
9. Freestanding signs shall be no more than 20 feet in height above adjacent street level. Internally illuminated signs, illuminated signs where hues change and neon signs are prohibited.
10. In order to maintain the safety and capacity of Bonita Road the following standards shall apply in addition to the standard development regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance:
  - a. All curb cuts/driveways should be located as near as practical to the property lines.

- b. Shared curb cuts/joint driveways are encouraged on public streets where feasible.
- c. Centerlines of curb cuts/joint driveways shall be at least 200 feet from the nearest intersection. If the lot frontage is less than 200 feet, curb cuts/joint driveways shall be located on the property line furthestmost from said intersection. A raised centerline median shall be encouraged subject to Department of Public Works approval.

#### DESIGNATOR "D2" FOR PARCELS ADJACENT TO EASTERN BONITA SPA (Subareas 450A & B)

##### OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this designator is to coordinate timing, sizing and location of public improvements for these parcels with the adjacent Eastern Bonita Specific Plan Area.

##### EXEMPTION

If these parcels develop before the Eastern Bonita Specific Plan Area is adopted, no site plan is required.

##### STANDARDS

Prior to approval of any development permits on the site, a site plan shall be submitted which conforms to all relevant County Ordinances and Codes, and in addition meets the following criteria:

- The site plan shall be compatible with development planned and/or built in the adjacent SPA.
- Access to these parcels and circulation within shall be compatible with access to the adjacent SPA.
- The design and layout of the development shall be compatible with the adjacent SPA.

#### DESIGNATOR "D3" FOR PARCELS WITHIN THE SWEETWATER DRAINAGE AREA (Subareas 410 and 450C)

##### OBJECTIVE

To protect the Sweetwater Reservoir from pollution caused by surrounding development.

##### STANDARDS

The watershed area for the Sweetwater Reservoir shall be protected from pollution by any development. To achieve this goal, the following restrictions are placed on land at or below the 500 foot MSL topographic curve which drains into the Sweetwater Reservoir. Prior to approval of any development permits on these sites, a site plan shall be submitted which conforms to all relevant County ordinances and codes and in addition, meets the following criteria:

1. Applicant shall work with the Sweetwater Authority to devise a runoff protection system which will protect the Reservoir, and the site plan shall include all facilities and systems required by the Director of the Department of Planning and Land Use for such protection.
2. Mechanical systems for runoff protection are not permitted unless the Sweetwater Authority is in agreement with their utilization.

#### DESIGNATOR "D4" FOR ROBINSON PROPERTY (SUBAREAS 203C, E, F)

##### OBJECTIVES

To ensure that the site is developed in a manner that is sensitive to its location at a busy intersection and adjacent to low density residential areas.

##### EXEMPTIONS

No site plans are required for detached single-family dwelling units.

##### STANDARDS

Prior to approval of any development permits on the site, a site plan shall be submitted which conforms to all relevant County Ordinances and Codes, and in addition meets the following criteria:

1. Structures shall be set back from Sweetwater Road a sufficient distance to minimize the impacts of traffic on uses.
2. Access to the site must be as far from the intersection of Central and Sweetwater Roads as feasible, in order to avoid further congestion of this intersection.
3. Structures must be sited so as to maximize landscaped spaces protected from the noise and associated traffic impacts of Sweetwater Road.
4. Structures should be designed and placed on the site in a manner that is consistent with the existing character of the neighborhood.